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Research of the Educational Policy in Kazakhstan: Analysis Reflection and Modeling

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Abstract

Problem statement: Under conditions of education globalization and society openness a problem involving comparison of educational policies practiced in different world countries is becoming more important, on the one hand, for coordination of vectors and trends of development and enrichment of education content and methods, and, on the other hand, for clearer identification, preservation of national educational values, and definition of a national development way. Issues of the research: It stimulates comparative researches of the educational policy to extend and elaborate reforms, a need for education managers and students to master methods of comparison and modeling for educational system development in an institution, region or a country. Research objective: Development of methods to be used in the comparative analysis of the educational policies practiced in various countries and definition of skills to model educational strategies focused on internationalization of education taking into account national traditions. Research methods: Methods of the research are based on a historiographic approach, systems and comprehensive approaches in education, critical analysis, and modeling. Historiographic materials of the research included:

- works of Kazakhstani and foreign scientists specializing in history of pedagogy and education, comparative pedagogy, and educational policy;
- laws and regulations;
- statistical digests and summaries, national reports on education in Kazakhstan;
- national websites;
- Kazakhstani and Russian periodicals, etc.

Summary: The following strategies are typical for Kazakhstan. The Soviet period: elimination of illiteracy, compulsory secondary education, popular education; a tradition of Kazakhstani people to appreciate knowledge and education is set. Educational strategies of independent Kazakhstan: “livelong learning – LLL”, continuous education, integration into world community, competitiveness of education, “triunity of languages”, computerization, variation of training, etc. A strategy map for education development in Kazakhstan is being developed starting from the 1930s to the present moment. Conclusion: A peculiar feature of the research is analysis using key tools of the educational policy - “strategy”, introduction of “strategy pyramid in education” concept, principles, parameters, and criteria of evaluation. As a basis of comparative research methods a comparative tool is built up: strategies (strategy pyramid) → principles → parameters and evaluation criteria of the educational policy. A hierarchized model of educational policy and strategy influence on education content and methods is worked out.

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Keywords: Educational policy; modeling; comparative education.

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1. Introduction

Problem of comparison of educational policy of world countries becomes important for enrichment of content and methods of education, and for clearer identification of the national way of development.

Working-out the methodological tools of comparative analysis was done for expansion and detailed elaboration of reforms, planning and prognostication of tendencies and threats of education development.

Under conditions of education globalization and society openness a problem of comparison of educational policies practiced in world countries is becoming more relevant, on the one hand, for coordination of vectors and trends of development and enrichment of education content, methods, benchmarking, on the other hand, for clearer identification, preservation of national educational values, and definition of a national development way.

It stimulates comparative researches of the educational policy to extend and elaborate reforms, a need for education managers and students to *master methods of comparison and modeling* of educational system development in an institution, region or a country.

2. Research objective

Development of *the methods to be used in comparative analysis* of the educational policies practiced in various countries and definition of skills to model educational strategies focused on internationalization of education taking into account national traditions.

Development of the technology of comparative analysis of educational policies of different countries and determination of the ability to model educational strategies with orientation to internationalization of education and preservation of national traditions. This technology is described on an example of the educational policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

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3. Research Methods

The methods of the research are based upon the historiographical approach, system and complex approaches in education, critical analysis, and modeling. In the framework of our research, 'fictive – country approach' developed by R.Murrey for study of educational policy 'tests' proposed by Donn Kerr for evaluation of educational policy principles, which any good state policy etc. should pass.

4. Research reflection

The research included analysis of literature and documents related to the educational policy in the following fields:

- **Analysis of documents:** analysis of current education documents used in the country; analysis of program documents, Addresses made by the President of Kazakhstan; historical analysis of education documents.
- **Analysis of analytical and expert publications:** benchmarking; analysis of national reports; comparative analysis of world educational and economic organizations; analysis of world and national ratings, summaries, and national reports on education; analysis of reports on human development; analysis of expert and statistical educational publications.
- **Analysis of mass media publications:** analysis of information editions; analysis of informational pedagogic editions, Internet educational portals.
- **Analysis of scientific literature:** analysis of pedagogic literature; analysis of political and historical literature; analysis of economic and social literature; analysis of philosophical literature; analysis of methodological literature in disciplines that are taught in schools or higher educational institutions.

5. Definition of “Educational Policy” concept

In world educational and political theory and practice a term of “educational policy” gained currency in the early 1980s. Earlier it had mainly concerned “school practice”. E. Dneprov defined “the school practice as an aggregate of legislative, ideological, administrative, pedagogic, and social measures in the educational sphere taken by a state, various professional and public associations, movements, social institutions to reach particular social and economic, political, cultural, and pedagogical purposes” (Dneprov E., 2006). The educational policy (according to E.D. Dneprov) is elaboration of national social ideology and social priorities in the educational sphere (social and pedagogic ideology, social and pedagogic priorities) and their comprehensive implementation.

In his work T. Reagan (2013) reproduced 8 definitions of the “educational policy” offered by foreign scientists. Policy analysts have identified eight different possible definitions of policy (Guba, 1984). Policy can be conceptualized as:

- An assertion of intents or goals;
 - The accumulated standing decisions of a governing body by which it regulates, controls, promotes, services, and otherwise influences matters within its sphere of authority;
 - A guide to discretionary action;
 - A strategy undertaken to solve or ameliorate a problem;
 - Sanctioned behavior, formally through authoritative decisions, or informally through expectations and acceptance established over time;
 - A norm of conduct characterized by consistency and regularity in some action area;
 - The output of the policymaking system: the cumulative effect of all actions, decisions, and behaviors of all the people who work in bureaucracies, covering every point in the policy cycle from agenda setting to impact; and
 - The effect of the policymaking and policy-implementing system is experienced by the client.
- “Policy analysts have identified eight different possible definitions of the policy (Cuba, 1984).

The policy can be understood as:

- Assertion of intents and goals;
- Accumulated standing decisions of a governing authority according to which it is regulated, controlled, promoted, rendered services, or otherwise influences issues within authority sphere;
- Monitored action guide;
- Strategy accepted to solve or improve quality of a problem;
- Approved behavior, or officially made as an authoritative decision, or unofficial expectations of participants that were passing approval during a long period;
- Accepted standard of behavior characterized by consistency and regularity in a particular sphere;
- Output of a policymaking system: cumulative effect of all actions, decisions, and behaviors of all people who work in an administration in each strategic cycle;
- Policy system checked by a client.

In our view, we proceeded from a fact that the educational policy was formed by many participants of the educational process: the state, public organizations, educational institutions and associations, professional societies of teachers, top managers of education, student associations, etc. Besides, designing of the educational policy covers all levels of the education management pyramid.

Tools of the educational policy are educational strategies. They set trends of educational system development in various countries on the basis of traditions and influence of integration process. Therefore, at the age of globalization *a role played by strategic planning of educational institution activity* has become more important.

6. Brief history

Presence of public education ideas, and therefore political influence on citizens, can be traced in views of ancient philosophers.

Even ancient Greeks told about a need in public upbringing and education system. Spartan and Athenian education system had the public nature. According to Plato, a goal of the state is approaching the highest idea of welfare. Mainly it is implemented by means of education. Upbringing must be organized by the state. According to Aristotle an objective of education is in development of the highest sides of the soul – rational and volitional. In general, the state has one ultimate purpose – all citizens need *identical education*, and it is obligation of the state to take care of this education. Family and public education must be interconnected. 7-year-old boys must start to visit public schools. Young men must get extensive education at school; they must study literature, history, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, music (Konstantinov N.A., 1974, p. 15-18).

Eastern educational traditions of the early Middle Ages also illustrate significance of the public education. Let's consider, for example, views of Abū Nasr Al-Farabi. To our opinion, in treatises of Al-Farabi it can be marked out a theory of educational system construction of a virtuous city.

Education and upbringing serve as instruments to construct a virtuous city where a person can be happy. On the one hand, this approach worked-out by Al-Farabi indicated a public need in upbringing and education, service of the “virtuous city” construction (in the treatise “Guiding to Happiness”). On this point, he indicates functions of education in the social and political sphere – they are understood in modern interpretation as “Encouragement of law-abiding legal and political behavior, reproduction of public (leading) ideology”. In this meaning it is a field of the educational policy.

On the other hand, Al-Farabi stressed significance of upbringing and education for the man himself for the purpose of moral and intellectual development to become happy (“About Achieving Happiness”).

7. Levels of modern educational policy research at the age of globalization

We should stress a need to consider conditionally *two layers of the educational policy* in the research. **The first one** is history and establishing of the educational system and the educational policy of different states, path of establishing the educational system in each country. To our opinion, it can be assumed that here differences in the systems, priorities of education development will dominate.

The second layer is supranational. At the age of globalization a process of educational system integration was started to join potentials of countries in world development. Here **the educational policy of state-to-state interaction** is formed; *new strategies and tools of education development coordination* are appearing. It is a new layer that bears novelty:

- in practice: new priorities, strategies, tools of cooperation, and coordination methods of the educational policy,
- in scientific and methodological field – new comparison tools, new knowledge. These tools of the educational policy can be called integrating or coordinating ones.

For example, Linsenmann I., Wessels W. describe principles and introduction of an open coordination method (OCM) at the international level within the framework of *the coordination policy* (Linsenmann I., Wessels W., 2002). From the very beginning European Community made commitment to economic integration and succeeded in it to a greater extent than in any other sphere. EU Lisbon Summit of 2000 can be considered a turning point in construction of the common educational policy (coordination policy), in particular, the OCM – open coordination method was introduced.

The open coordination method includes the following elements (Lomakina I.S., 2009):

- development of governing principles and general objectives of EU member states, as well as concrete schedules to achieve the set objectives for short-, mid-, and long-term perspectives;
- working-out of quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarking for comparative evaluation of conducted policies with the best in the world indicators in these spheres;
- transformation of principles developed at the European level for a level of national and regional policy with setting specific objectives and tasks taking into account national and regional peculiarities;
- periodic monitoring, evaluation and analysis, arranged in a form of collaborative learning process.

8. Strategizing educational activity

As a development trend a principle of “orientation to the future” arms us with a new weapon – strategizing of the educational activity. Concepts of the strategy and tactics came to educational, political, economic science from science of warfare. In general sense, “strategy”

(from Greek *strategia*) is a system of large-scale decisions and intended fields of activity, by consistent implementation of which the set objectives must be achieved in a more or less satisfactory way. In business the “strategy” is purposeful activity of an organization including planning, production of goods, marketing, and personnel management.

The strategies are directions with long run, “views in the future”. We also understand the strategy as a development vector. They set goals for movement, application of styles and methods.

The strategy of education development is definition and implementation of long-term goals and means of educational system development, time and terms of goal implementation, a system of implementation value indications.

Educational strategy is a concept and vector of development which is a basis of the educational policy; it characterized long-term, essential settings, plans, main directions and principles of development of the educational system as an integral social institute.

According to a definition of Y. Kuznetsov, strategizing is an aggregate of strategic planning, forecasting, and management (Kuznetsov Y.A., 2012).

Thus, it can be built the pyramid of strategies in education (figure 1).

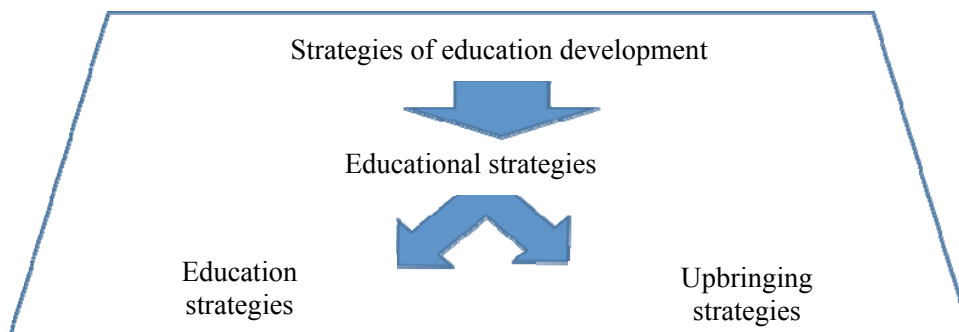


Figure 1 – “Pyramid” of strategies in education

“Pyramid” of strategies in education: strategies of education development → educational strategies → education strategies + upbringing strategies. For higher education institutions strategies of scientific activity of the higher education institution can be added.

9. Discussion: modeling of education development strategies

Main directions of educational policy study are directions of educational system development within the framework of the selected policy. Within scopes of the research a *new tool* of comparative researches has been developed – *mapping of education development strategies*. This method helps to systematize, reconsider, and trace milestones of education development, and to re-evaluate history of education development. The strategy maps assist in understanding and formation of new strategies, forecasting of education development. Having carried out the analysis of secondary education of Kazakhstan in the Soviet and independence periods the following strategies of secondary education development were revealed (Mynbayeva A., Pogosyan V., 2014).

The following strategies are typical for Kazakhstan. The Soviet period: *elimination of illiteracy, compulsory secondary education, public education*; a *tradition of Kazakhstani people to appreciate knowledge and education* is set. Educational strategies of independent Kazakhstan: *“lifelong learning – LLL”*, *permanent education*, *integration into the world community*, *competitiveness of education*, *“triumph of languages”*, *computerization*, *variation of training*, etc. Within scopes of the research a strategy map for development of school education in Kazakhstan has been developed starting from the 1930s to the present moment (Figure).

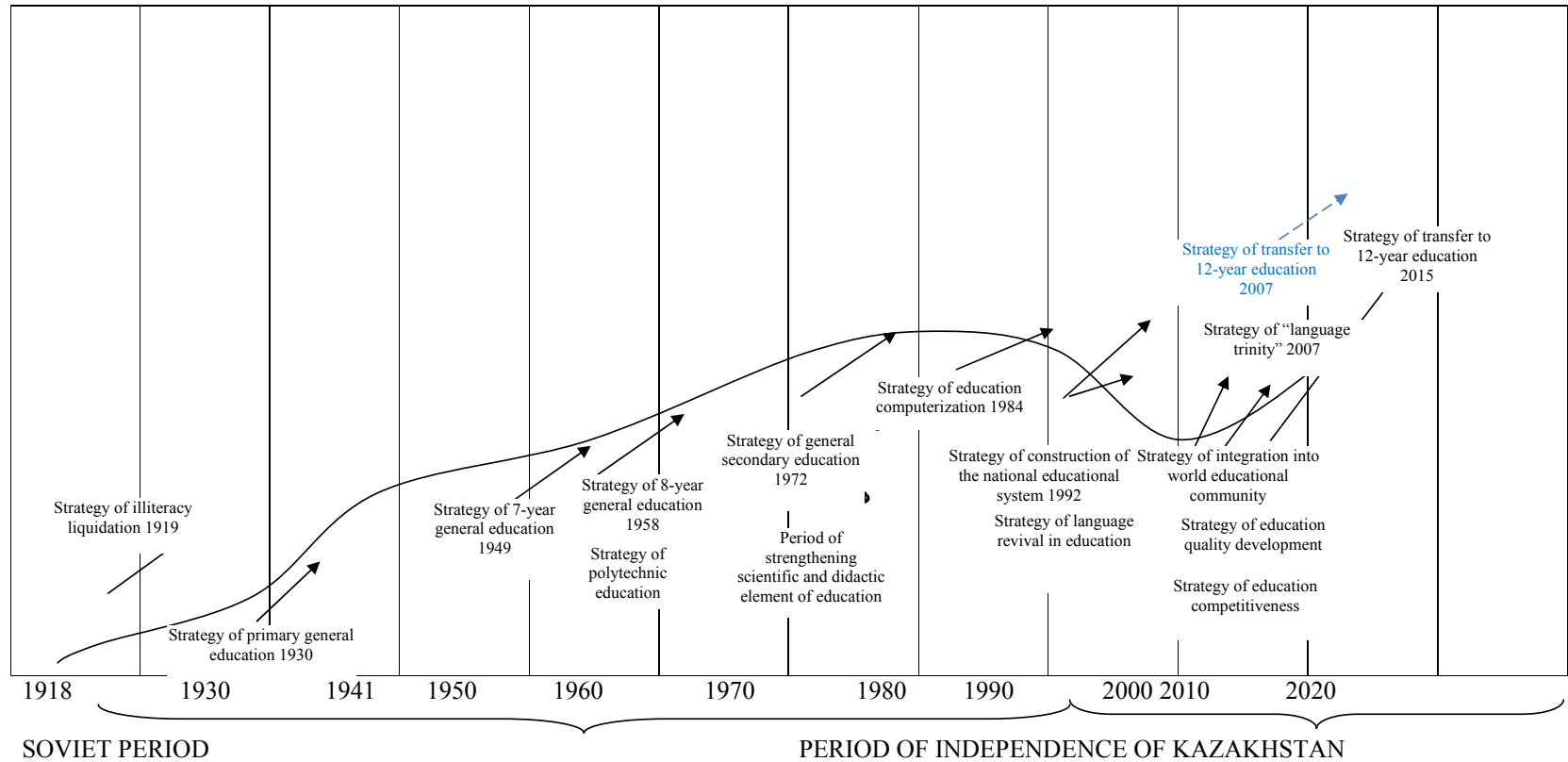


Figure – Course of educational system development in Kazakhstan

Today historically developed policy of popular education and compulsory secondary education of the Soviet period is being enriched by world traditions. 12-year secondary education, vocational training is being introduced. Analysis of secondary education system development in Kazakhstan allows to single out both traditional educational strategies, and new strategies of the XXI century within the framework of world tendencies.

Human Development Index (HDI) of Kazakhstan for 1990-2010 increased from 0.620 to 0.714, i.e. by 10% or in average by 0.5% per annum.

Educational strategies of Kazakhstan: “education for life term” – “live long learning – LLL”, continuous education, integration into the world space, competitiveness of education, ‘triunity of languages’, computerization, variation of education, etc.

A tendency to extension of compulsory secondary education – to 12-year education is illustrated. Analysis of the strategy map shows that 12-year secondary education complies both with the Soviet tradition of increase in general education and world trends. Relevant succession is established in development of school education, leading trends of which are *increase in general education, popular education traditions, knowledge values*, as well as restored at the present moment *planning nature of education infrastructure development*.

10. Conclusion

A peculiar feature of the research is analysis with key tools of the educational policy - “strategy”, introduction of “strategy pyramid in education” concept, principles, parameters, and criteria of evaluation. As a basis of comparative research methods the comparative tool is built up: strategies (strategy pyramid) → principles → parameters and criteria of evaluation of the educational policy. A hierarchized model of educational policy and strategy influence on education content and methods is worked out.

Mapping of education development can become a new method of the comparative researches. This method helps to systematize, reconsider, and trace milestones of education development. At the same time it facilitates re-evaluation of education development history in Kazakhstan. The strategy maps assist in understanding and formation of new strategies, forecasting of education development.

The concept of ‘pyramid of strategies in education’ was introduced corresponding principles, parameters, and criteria of evaluation were exposed. Methodological apparatus is built, as the basis of comparative research technology: strategies (pyramid of strategies) → principles → parameters and criteria. Hierarchized model of influence of educational policy and strategies upon the content and methods of education were developed.

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